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FALL 2016

We're waking up and reaching for sweaters.

Now's the time to go inside and get some fresh ideas for your decor—or even a new place to live! Find modern, classic and vintage inspiration in Seven Dots' quarterly supplement about home design and real estate.

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Into the Woods

A Brooklyn family settles in rural North Ferrisburgh

STORY BY AMY LILLY
PHOTOS BY JIM WESTPHALEN

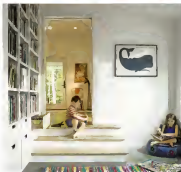
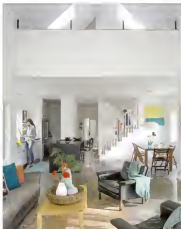
In a remote, wooded spot at the end of a winding dirt lane in North Ferrisburgh sits a house that is intimately familiar to people all over the country. That's because the Knoll House — as its designer, Bristol architect Ellsworth Herrmann, named it — was recently written up on Houzz, the home-design website that reportedly reaches 35 million viewers.

INTO THE WOODS: 58 PB



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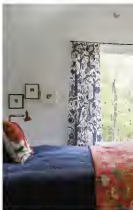
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into the Woods 471

Despite its 15 minutes of fame, the house remains a secluded retreat, as this reporter can attest. On a recent sunny afternoon, Hermanson and Nina Griffin, co-owner with her husband, Dylan, showed me around while the Griffins' daughter and son, ages 8 and 3, teased each other and watched television. Smokers the dog followed the tour closely.

"Knoll" refers to the local firm, not the well-known design company that sells reproductions of iconic modern furniture. But those products would fit comfortably into the house's design scheme. Nina, a writer and artist, and Dylan, a photographer, have a preference for white walls and clutter-free living. And while the couple recently launched an online magazine devoted to Vermont living, called *State 14*, Nina's heritage is part Scandinavian. She inherited her Swedish artist mother's taste for design as well as actual vintage items, including plywood-and-chrome bar stools by Arne Jacobsen and fabrics by Josef Frank.

The couple purchased the undeveloped 10-acre lot in 2008 while they were living in Brooklyn, N.Y. It was part of a 70-acre, antique sheep farm that the previous owner had subdivided into nine parcels. For a few years before the children arrived, the couple vacationed at the wooded property, setting

up a tent on the natural knoll. The living room, the house's focal point, as now on that site, broad windows on three sides reveal fields and a pond through the surrounding trees.

Discussions about the house's design "started with the land," said Hermanson. Turning to Nina, the architect recalled, "You had done this soft edit [of the land]" based on the advice of Burlington landscape architecture firm Wagner Hodgson, which had designed a cottage nearby.

That helped Hermanson conceive of a structure that would blend with its environment. "We jokingly call it the stealth house," she said.

The home's eastern white cedar siding is stained a dark brown to match the trees, and the gray standing-seam metal roof merges with the leaves' shadows. The distinctive siding is designed so that corner eiding is unnecessary; the ship lap boards wrap uninterrupted around the L-shaped house, as do the panel-width reveals between them.

The Knoll House straddles the line between traditional and minimalist. Its pitched rooflines recall New England farmhouses, yet its form contains several cutouts — negative spaces that form the front entry porch and other outdoor living spaces that will soon be capped with decks. Hermanson said these "bits" cut of the otherwise simple, rectangular space "diminish the heaviness."



Inside are more combinations of modern and traditional. The double-height living room's end wall contains a single, large, upper-story window that's offset within its peaked wall space. The kitchen is designed with another large window in place of upper cabinets, storage and the fridge are off to the side in a built-in pantry. Yet the staircase, which leads to a mezzanine level and left, is as traditional as stairs get: ash steps, plain, white-painted spindles, a flat wood banister. No floating risers or sculptural balustrades here, though these modern trends wouldn't look out of place.

The interior is 2,300 square feet — modest, but a huge upgrade from the 900-square-foot Brooklyn apartment the couple previously shared. “We had boxes stacked up everywhere,” Nina recalls of their New York life. The Griffins moved into their Vermont home two years ago.

The shorter wing of the L lends down three steps to a playroom with a built-in bookcase, a guest room, and the children's room and bath. In each, windows are wider than expected and sit only a few inches above the floor, so if a kidling occupies no step outside at any time.

The starry window is a square — few windows in the house are alike — and set surprisingly close to the landing. It frames a picturesque view in one second. Posing it, Nina commented, “This is one of the things where I’d wake up and say, ‘Oh, Lisa, thank you.’”

In winter, the homeowner marveled, the snow seen through all those windows merges with the white walls. Heat comes from the radiant concrete floor and a windowless whose customer exit pipe adds a sculptural touch.

Herrmann, who mostly designs residences, including a 4.83-acre-foot “moss-house,” commented that she doesn’t like to repeat herself. “I love to design specifically for people and their hand. If someone were to say, ‘Can I have those house plans?’ I would say ‘No.’”

The Knoll House fits its own size and light, she said. “It wouldn’t work anywhere else.”

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Bayberry Commons hopes to grow Burlington's housing market — and a community

STORY BY CAROLYN SHAPIRO | PHOTOS BY MATTHEW THORSEN

A new complex in Burlington appears to consist of a row of townhouses, each with a unique facade: Some have ocean-blue or yellow siding; others, deep-red brick. They all face a common square that will soon contain green space, community gardens, apple trees and a grilling pavilion. Old-fashioned streetlights, equipped with energy-saving LED bulbs, overlook wide cement sidewalks.

If that sounds like a quaint cityscape, it is. Just behind those townhouse exteriors is a surprise: a single apartment building divided into 22 units with one or two bedrooms each. All have shiny granite countertops, cushy beige carpeting and ample closet space.

This is Bayberry Commons Apartments, one of the largest housing projects to take shape in Burlington in several years. When it's completed in mid-2016, the 19 residential buildings comprising the former S.D. Ireland cement plant on Grove Street — just east of Colchester Avenue — will have 232 units available for rent.

Though most of the complex is still under construction, the first apartments opened last month in the two-story townhouse-like structure on the north side of the property. A three-story ribbon of apartments nearby will add another 30 apartments in November. Three duplexes close to Grove Street await

occupancy now, and three more will open later this year.

Rents range from \$1,650 per month for a one-bedroom unit to \$2,150 for a two-bedroom, two-story duplex with a full basement. The 15 percent of units designated "inclusionary" or affordable under city requirements, will cost between \$850 and \$1,075 per month.

All together, Bayberry Commons will make a small dent in the chronic rental-housing shortage that has plagued Burlington for at least two decades. Vacancy rates in the city have bounced at or below 7 percent since 2006 and dipped to low as 0.9 percent, except for a peak of 27 percent in 2009, according to the city's 2006 Action Plan for Housing & Community Development.

"There is a limited supply of housing units at all levels of the market, and an unusually high vacancy rate exacerbates the issue," reads the plan. "In addition, our extensive student population creates a significant impact on Burlington's



housing market. . . Burlington has a significantly higher percentage of renters, and the cost of rent is increasing at a higher rate."

S.D. Ireland's owners had this in mind when they proposed the redevelopment of the property in 2012. Three years earlier, the family-run company purchased competitor S.T. Griswold in Wilton and decided to consolidate its cement operations at one site, leaving the other available for new use.

During a recent tour of the complex, Patrick O'Brien — senior project manager for Bayberry Commons and S.D. Ireland's general manager of construction and development — told *Star*, "We felt that Burlington was lacking a go-to apartment community."

By that, he meant a well-lit, safe,

walkable and self-contained place to live, with gathering spots to encourage social interaction. Here, O'Brien said, "you're going to know your neighbor."

Burlington Mayor Miro Weinberger applauded Bayberry Commons as another step toward addressing the "acute need" for more rental housing, which has not kept pace with demand. New rental developments in Burlington must make a certain percentage of units affordable, but any increasing supply of apartments at any price will alleviate demand, and ultimately lead to lower rents across the board, he said.

"There's no doubt that our lack of new supply of rental homes over a sustained number of years is playing a substantial role in driving our affordability crisis," the mayor said.

The S.D. Ireland plant — on a 28-acre industrial swath once beset by toxic cement and dump trucks — had long deviated from the surrounding residential landscape. Burlington anyone back to Terrace Sanders in the early 1990s had requested redevelopment of the site, which S.D. Ireland had occupied since 1975, O'Brien said.

From the start, the developer wanted to integrate Bayberry Commons into Burlington's existing urbanized landscape.

"The most important thing was maintaining the neighborhood feel," said Kim Ireland, the company's vice

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president, who wore a hard hat and gloves while helping plant trees in the central square. "It's been industrial for years," she said of the property. "We wanted it to fit in with the neighborhoods around it."

The duplexes facing Grove Street, for example, sit on an embankment with steps leading to wide front porches, resembling some of the stately single-family homes in the city's early Hill section. Inside, the living space splits into two 1,100-square-foot apartments, each on two levels.

A future phase of the project includes a large community center with a game room, fitness center, outdoor swimming pool and commercial kitchen, allowing residents to host parties there. S.D. Ireland hopes these features will give Bayberry Commons an edge once the housing supply dries and starts to meet demand, facing landlords to compete for tenants, O'Brien says.

Other selling points Bayberry Commons Apartments have: unusually high nine-foot ceilings and their own walking machines and dryers. Kipper units offer balconies big enough to fit a small table and chairs for al fresco dining. And, particularly rare in Burlington housing, the grade of the property allows for underground parking. Garages offer at least one parking space per unit, plus storage spaces for tenants to store bikes and other bulky items.

Connection to the natural landscape is another key component of Bayberry



WHEN COMPLETED, THE 19 RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS WILL HAVE 232 UNITS AVAILABLE FOR RENT.



Commons. Units in the two-story building share an open backyard stretching to the surrounding woods, through which tenants can walk to the Wisconsin River. A path will make it easier to carry down a fishing pole or kayak, O'Brien said.

In addition to the apple trees planned for the center green, S.D. Ireland planted blueberry, raspberry and blackberry bushes around the property. Tenants can pick fresh fruit to supplement their garden-grown vegetables, O'Brien said.

He said Bayberry Commons will target University of Vermont graduate students as well as employees of Saint Michaels College and nearby tech

companies, such as MyWebGrocer in Wisconsin. Any of those tenants could easily bike or walk to work.

That would help to alleviate an anticipated increase in traffic from Bayberry Commons that nearby residents have raised as a concern. Some complained about the project's initial proposed scale and suggested it would start an already-clogged stretch of road.

In response, S.D. Ireland made several concessions, first reducing the size of the project by about 50 units. The developer paved and added lighting and sidewalks to the Schenckels Park parking lot, across from the park and just north of the Bayberry Commons entrance on Grove Street, and plans to

install two pedestrian crosswalks with the same rapid-flashing system used on Pine Street in Burlington's North End.

S.D. Ireland also agreed to extend the now-unfinished sidewalk along Grove Street to the South Burlington town line and install new speed bumps and a digital speed limit sign.

"We remain concerned about the ultimate traffic impact," said Erhard Mahle, who lives with his wife on Grove Street right next to Bayberry Commons. He emphasized, though, that he appreciated S.D. Ireland's changes, which improved the project from its initial proposal.

Neighbors also worried about Bayberry Commons serving as a hub of off-campus housing for college students. That prediction has partly come to pass, with Champlain College leasing 12 of the 16 now-vacant units. The college approached the developer when it realized some incoming students this year that it could house, O'Brien said. It made room by offering upper-levels apartments there.

So far, that's one housing shortage Bayberry Commons has helped to solve. ■

Top left: A granite-topped bar separates the open kitchen from the living room. Top right: Duplexes at Bayberry Commons look like single-family houses. Bottom: Bayberry Commons look under construction.

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Through the Drinking Glass

A new book illuminates Simon Pearce's influences and design philosophy

BY KIRK KARDASHIAN

Most people acknowledge that their parents had some influence on their tastes and preferences. For the glassblower and artist Simon Pearce, the parental effect looms large. Even today, Pearce, 70, can picture almost everything his family sat on and cooked with in his childhood home in southeastern Ireland.

The house itself was a typical Georgian country house, square and symmetrical. Inside, the Pearces used a mixture of traditional and contemporary furniture, glass and cutlery. Pearce did not rebel from those designs, he absorbed them. They now define the handmade glassware he sells at his landmark Quebec location and in 500 stores around the United States.

These design roots are the subject of *Simon Pearce: Design for Living*, a new coffee-table book by Pearce's longtime friend and colleague Glenn Rankin. Through narrative and photography, the book tells Pearce's life story and connects his upbringing, family and mentors to Pearce's design philosophy and, ultimately, the well-known Simon Pearce brand.

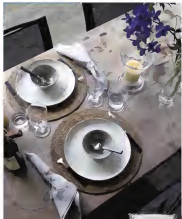
Pearce grew up in Shengarry, a small town on the coast. His father, Philip, chose to settle there instead of trying to London and running the family pottery business. Pearce's mother, Lucy, was one of the first female secondary professors in Britain. When they moved to the Irish

countryside, they maintained their cultured and sophisticated perspectives but indulged in creative endeavors that fed their souls more than their bank account. Philip opened a small pottery studio, and Lucy, in addition to helping with the business, taught herself to cook.

Young Simon seemed to fit in with his parents' second lives much better than their first ones. He had dyslexia and never finished high school, but he always knew he wanted to make things with his hands.

"At first I thought I would make furniture, and then my father's pottery was there, so I thought I'd try that," he remembers. When he was 16, Pearce went to New Zealand for two years to learn pottery, training under the English potter Harry Davis. When he returned to Ireland, he worked for a year with his father before opening his own pottery shop in his hometown.

The medium agreed with Pearce, but he was also anxious to try something



THROUGH THE DRINKING GLASS ■ P. 15



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different from what his father did. He became infatuated with glass during trips to visit his godfathers, the artist Patrick Scott, in Dublin. Scott kept a large wooden cupboard in his house filled with Georgian glassware—cups, tumblers and flutes of all sizes. They all had one thing in common: simplicity. Aside from some of the long, thin pieces, the glasses seemed to be clear copies of the ancient chalice, with wide, sturdy feet and the slightest of curves. Pearce wondered why no one was making glass like that anymore. Then he decided to make it himself.

After spending a few years learning glassmaking techniques and how to build furnaces, Pearce opened stores in Clifton, Dublin and Kenmare in the 1970s, but he also sold pottery made by his father and his brother, Stephen. Business was good, but, according to Pearce, it was frustrating to be an entrepreneur in Ireland in those days. “The phones didn’t work, the mail

didn’t work, the banks didn’t work,” he recalls. “That was really why I left.”

When Pearce visited Vermont for the first time, in 1980, he was looking for someplace like Shantagony in which to live, raise a family and grow his business.

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SIMON PEARCE

was. The mill in Quebec, which dates to 1860, was the perfect site. It had a stunning location on the Ottawa-Quebec River, where a dam handles water and mist onto rocks below. And it could be retrofitted with a turbine to harness the river’s energy that would power the glass furnace.

In 1988, Pearce and his wife, Pils, moved into an apartment on the second floor of the mill and opened a store on the ground floor. Today, the site

includes a restaurant and bar overlooking the waterfalls.

Over the past 35 years, Pearce has maintained his style and design ethos, buying pieces that are simple, elegant, handmade and functional. For him,

there is no one definition of good design, just the one that works for each individual, like the one that works for such things as, in a sense, glasses, because they don’t reflect the vices or preoccupations of a particular era. They just work.

“If you buy something and live with it, use it every day, and in 20 years you enjoy it as much as the day you bought it,” he says, “that really, for me, is the sign of something that really works.”

As he ventures into his eighth

decade, Pearce is still making glass, but mostly in the winter when the furnace room is a bit cooler. And he enjoys advising his son, Andrew, who makes and sells wooden bowls at a shop just a few miles from the Quebec mill.

From the beginning, Pearce has endeavored to make each piece unique in some way—to have the modest, barely discernible variations that happen with handmade goods. But sometimes, many of the stories that tell his work didn’t get the message. “All they want is everything to be identical,” he says. They should be, says *Simon Pearce Design for Living* illustrators, through dozens of beautiful photographs and Pearce’s own memories, the one is one of a kind. It’s no surprise that his glassware always will be, too. **EW**

INFO

Simon Pearce: Design for Living, by Simon Pearce, illustrated by John Steinhilber (photographer), 112 pp., \$18.95, \$10.95 (pb), \$10.95 (e)



Top center: Williamstown, Mass., the Pearce family home in Shantagony Island, in the 1980s. Center: One of Simon Pearce's original small stores, an antique store in Dublin. Top right: Glass at work in his Barre, Vermont workshop in the 1970s. Bottom right: Simon's current flagship location in Quebec.



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Joseph Wilens, owner Deep E

Diving Deep

A South End designer makes old stuff new again

BY SAGIE WILLIAMS

The Burlington furniture and home goods shop Deep E is captivating: An air plant floats in an Erlenmeyer flask; Thorstein's Walrus goes for a ride in a wire basket fastened to the body of a toy bike; a steel tripod becomes an industrial lampstand. These and other whimsical constructions are the hybrid creations of 24-year-old Joseph Wilens.

He opened the Flynn Avenue store in June with the help of a small business loan. Within the weathered brick walls, Wilens displays his inventive handwork alongside ready-to-go flea market finds. Think vintage cameras, a treated traffic light, military speakers turned into lampshades, a curated selection of vintage books and a refurbished cast-iron serving table.

Scattered amid trunks-e-tables and fanciful lighting, the blond maker says he's always been drawn to artifacts of the home. He enjoys what he calls "the magic of everyday life" and seeks to

make beautiful "the things that are there for you, and you use them, but you don't normally think about them."

That attention to detail and function stems from his eye and also his education. Wilens, a Vermont native, graduated from Middlebury College of Art and Design in 2011 with an industrial design degree. One of his teachers at Vermont Community School, Wilens notes, had nudged him toward that field. He could have focused on pure fabrication, dressing up completely new items, but instead gravitated toward reworking



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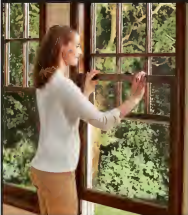


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Diving Deep

found objects, giving them fresh faces and new functions

Wiles' constructions are inspired by a Vermontian desire to promote recycling and a fascination with what he calls "scholarship aesthetics," as well as classic American design. Consider the numbered locker booklets he uses as wall shelves, or the orange plastic school chairs down up to a wood table on harp legs. Each piece, discarded by their previous owners, shows off clean lines and practical functionality. And both look completely suited to their new, modern setting.

At the same time, those slippery plastic chairs will remind some of taking tests in high school. A set of time-burned wooden rulers might have been plucked from a 1960s classroom.

Black-and-white photos, curling at the edges, enhance the postmodern sensibility.

Namaste permeates Wiles' work, and he cites one of his favorite film directors, Wes Anderson, as a major influence. "[His films] really showcase everyday objects in a simple, artistic way that really shows the true nature of objects," Wiles noted in a press release when he launched his business last fall. Many of Wiles' creations would be right at home in a film like *The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou*.

That's because the designer has a thing for natural themes. It's the source of the name Deep & Originally a common term, it denotes anything deeper than six feet, below which an object would be difficult to recover. The term became idiomatic over time and is now used as a verb to indicate that something has been noted or hinted at is beyond resolution.

Recycling, naturally. Wiles is repurposing the term for himself. He's giving treasured or abandoned objects a makeover — and, he hopes, new homes. As he puts it, "I try to make everything belong."

Most of the items at Deep & are refurbished or found items from flea markets and estate sales, but Wiles also frames works by local crafters and artists. His most, Laura, has fashioned pillows made from old T-shirts, as well as sophisticated bohemian-style seats and harp covers for bench seats. Colorful folk-art-inspired paintings by Lisa Lullbrings line the walls.

Wiles plans to continue showcasing local artists and, in the future, aims to sell ceramics and plants, too. Meanwhile, he'll keep fringing for one-of-a-kind trash and turning it into treasures. ♥

INFO

Deep & is located at 182 Fifth Avenue in Burlington. 540-638-0000 deepandorig.com



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nest House Hunt!

Following first-time buyers on the search for their dream homes BY CAROLYN FOX

If you've been through the process, you know there's a learning curve, complete with near misses, drama and mystifying paperwork along the way. If you're starting to think about getting out of that rental and buying your own home, our House Hunters just might have some eye-opening tips for you.

Home at Last: After a Yearlong Search, Jessica and Nick Settle in Waterbury

When Jessica Hendry Nelson and Nicholas Adams got married in August 2014, they swapped hopes and dreams for their life together. Sky is the limit when it comes to home ownership, something with character and charm in which they'd start their shared future. The young thirtysomethings wasted no time and started house hunting late that month.

Nick first spoke to Jessica just a couple of months into their search, which had already been an emotional roller coaster ride. She and Nick had immediately fallen for a great house on two acres in Georgia that had all the original details the architecture-loving couple had hoped for: exposed beams, hardwood floors, crown moldings, a fireplace. But the inspection revealed an extra \$15,000 of necessary renovations. The sellers weren't willing to negotiate, so Jessica and Nick had to back out of the deal. "It was overwhelming," Jessica told Nest shortly after, adding that "nothing else seems to compare."

Now, having looked at roughly 40 houses in the last year, the couple has finally found everything they want in a three-bedroom New Englander-style home in Waterbury. Built in 1916, the well-maintained, move-in-ready structure sits on nearly an acre of land within walking distance to downtown.



The one-car garage needs work, but Thatcher Brook runs through the backyard and Jessica notes the hardwood floors, wood-burning stove, beautiful moldings, covered porch and back deck with happiness.

"Out of all these homes, this house by far surpasses anything else we had looked at," she says.

Their biggest obstacles.

IT'S A SELLER'S MARKET. Jessica and Nick's Waterbury home was on the market for just three days and in that time it received more offers. "It just speaks to the scarcity of a home in this location...and the value of the market right now," says Jessica. There would be 12 bidders for every one of those homes. (That we liked?)

HONEY TRAPS. "We ended up spending much more than we thought we were going to spend" says Jessica, who notes that it was hard they considered moving forward to find something more affordable. "We realized in this search that we had to go over budget to get what we wanted."

PREPARE TO GO FAR. "We saw homes half the price and feel we were looking for," says Jessica,

who limited the search to anything built before 1950. They just don't have the character that "we're looking for." That was, the one thing we weren't willing to compromise on.

Their top tips.

GO THE DISTANCE. Waterbury wasn't in Jessica and Nick's original search zone, but bowdlering their field brought them more options and more affordable prices

And they found it just in time. "We came to a verbal agreement on another house in Essex," she explains, "and that was also an old farmhouse, [but it] needed to be completely gutted and renovated. We were just about to sign the paperwork when this popped up."

Jessica was out of town, but Nick told her that "this looked perfect, much better than the house we were about to buy," she recalls. "He went the next day and there were about 30 people looking at the house. We were nervous, but this was exactly what we were looking for, so we decided we should at least try."

The house was listed at \$249,000, which was within their range. But they knew they'd need to put in a higher offer to stand out. They also wished all of the inspections in order to be competitive. It worked. The seller accepted, and, following the appraisal, the couple will move in early this October.

"This is a relief," says Jessica. "We just can't wait to move and get settled and settled. I feel like we're starting the next chapter, and this is the perfect place to do it."

As thanks for sharing their story with Nest, we're giving Jessica and Nick a home-owning present: a five-hour home-ownership consultation and \$100 gift certificate from Shore Kitchens Back & Co. Inc.

tips — without adding too much drive time to Burlington.

PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE. "If you have the luxury of being patient, be patient," advises Jessica. "Because you never know when the right home will come on the market. I just sit, think back that we didn't settle for a lot of offers, we were considering settling for. We didn't end up compromising too much."

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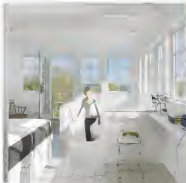
From bucolic landscapes to sleek resorts, photographer Jim Westphalen gets the picture

BY RACHEL ELIZABETH JONES



At Edgewater Gallery's Mill Street location in Middlebury, Jim Westphalen's photographs seem to open like windows onto Vermont's crumbling, leaning and sagging vernacular architecture. The Shelburne artist's solo show, titled simply "vanish," elevates the documentation of New England's dilapidated barns and industrial relics to the level of rich, intimate and astoundingly sharp portraiture. Westphalen's sophistication results from 30-plus years as a commercial architectural photographer.

VERMONT: © JON



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"Even as a kid, when we traveled to New England, it held this certain mystique to me," he says. "The farms, the barns, the old outbuildings—I've always had an affinity [for them]." He describes himself as a masochist: "I feel like maybe I was born in the wrong century."

Westphalen was born on Long Island in New York—in the 19th century. He majored in marine biology in college and, as a professional photographer, considers himself "pretty much self-taught." He learned his trade by attending seminars in New York and doing an early three-year stint as an assistant to a portrait photographer.

In 1995, Westphalen and his wife visited Burlington for the first time; they moved to Shelburne the following year. "I knew I couldn't be specializing in any one thing," he says, "because I had to make a living." His commercial work now spans interior and exterior architecture, landscapes, lifestyle, and fine dining, and has been featured in *Design New England*, *New England Home*, *EntreWell* and *Vermont Life*, among other publications—including *Wear*.

Westphalen's attraction to shooting landscapes contributes to his reputation as a romantically oriented architectural photographer: "I love landscapes, and, when you're shooting that kind of photography, you include the landscape as well," he says. "When I started

working for architects and designers, it really clicked."

Regardless of subject matter, Westphalen explains, "It comes down to composition and light. I shape a photograph, whether it's a glass dish or an interior, with light."

Records, he notes, "are where I get to use my complete bag of tricks."

That makes sense, since practitioners of the gateway experience generally include wrapping visitors, both interior, relaxed guests and cringing diners of food.

The photos in "rooms" are in many ways the polar opposite of the images that grace glossy magazine pages and marketing materials. No one would shell out hundreds of bucks to spend the night in, say, a partially collapsed circa-1850 brick house in

Shelburne on an abandoned Salisbury dairy barn that is "no longer structurally sound." Each of the images in the exhibition is accompanied by a description of the building's history, giving the works additional depth. "I wonder what the people were like there, what the history was, what the structure was used for," Westphalen says. "I always have those questions in my head."

The window-like quality of the photographs is the result of many creative decisions, beginning with the digital image itself. "The pixel formation on the sensor itself has a certain look," Westphalen explains. Instead of using glossy paper, he chose to print the

images on watercolor paper to evoke "a painterly feel," he says. The works are mounted like canvases, without glass. "It brings the viewer in—you can really check out the detail," Westphalen says.

His works convey the second-guess moment of creating a rural hill when the light is just so and encountering a monumental, ruin-like barn. Though the images can be a bit melancholic, Westphalen masterfully captures the dignity of his building-subjects.

The photographer describes mounting "rooms" as "a bit of a risk,"

noting that he wondered, *Is it just me? Is anybody else going to get this?* But viewers' responses to the show have set his modesty to rest. "I found it has really resonated," Westphalen says. 

INFO

Jim Westphalen's "rooms" is on view through September 30 at Edgewater Gallery at Middlebury Falls. edgewatergallery.com/jimwestphalen.com

Clockwise from top: "Shelburne Abandoned," "Coal Sho" private residence, Vermont

**WHEN I STARTED
WORKING FOR
ARCHITECTS AND
DESIGNERS,
IT REALLY
CLICKED.**

JIM WESTPHALEN



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Parents: Kelle and Devin Bourdeau

Kids: Evan, Ryan, Zach, Zac, &

Batcave Bedroom

Superhero-inspired DIY décor for kids

BY ALISON NOVAK

Budget-Friendly Touches

- Bourdeau bought the majority of her materials at Low's. The yellow hat used for the light beams and windows came from the costume shelf and cost less than a dollar.
- Costume hangers hanging in the corners of the room and little strings of hot lights came from a dollar store.
- Bourdeau pulled apart a sparkly black hat and used the gold for 15 cents in a dragon after Halloween, and it is affixed the winged emblems to the wall with poster putty.

When Kelle Bourdeau moved into a house in Burlington's New North End two years ago, she wasn't a fan of the wood paneling covering many of its walls. In the living room, she painted the planks a soft gray and was surprised by how much that lightened up the space.

She took a much bolder approach in the bedroom shared by her sons, Phin, 7, and Zac, 5. Inspired by their love of the 1960s "Batman" TV series, Bourdeau painted a Gotham-style cityscape with bright yellow windows. She covered their paneling with purple and black vertical stripes. Light beams bearing Bat-Signals emanate from two of the skyscrapers. Inside the rays of light, Bourdeau used glue-in-the-dark paint to spell out her sons' names — a fun feature when it's time for lights out.

Bourdeau — who took art classes in college — did the mural freehand. Painting, she says, provides her with a "creative release." She let her first grader and preschooler pitch in, even though it meant a less-than-perfect paint job in some spots.

The caped-crusader motif extends to other parts of the room. Batman-themed blankets and sheets adorn the twin beds, and a retro-looking bat light scored at Big Tom hangs on the wall. A bright purple blanket, loaned by the boys' grandmother, adds a personal

touch. And there are plenty of Batman toys scattered around, including a plastic Batcave and a Joker alarm clock Phin got for his seventh birthday.

But not everything adheres to the theme. There's a cat poster on the wall, and Superman stickers are strategically placed inside each Bat-Signal.

Bourdeau's philosophy: "When it's your room, you can do what you want."

This article originally appeared in Kids VT in March 2016.

In Your Element

Rich Cook & Family, Colchester, Vermont
Mid-Century Enthusiast, Child Advocate, Father

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